

are patterned and cut with the use of a fifth mask. Five hundred angstroms of Cr, 2000 angstroms of Ni and 5000 angstroms of Au are deposited, patterned and lifted off for pad and solder frame metal 33 in FIG. 4j. Passivated leadouts 40 in first metal 26 or second metal 27 pass under the seal ring metal 33 in FIG. 4j. Plasma etched pump-out port vias 11 are patterned and cut on layers 23b and 23a of the back of wafer 13 in FIG. 4k. There is a KOH etch of the back side of wafer 13 through 90 percent of wafer 13 for port 11 in FIG. 4l. Port 11 is completed with an etch through via 32 to the front of wafer 13 as shown in FIG. 4m.

Top cap wafer 14, like detector wafer 13, is fabricated with films compatible with 300 degree C. bakes and low outgassing. Wafer 14 acts as the window for infrared devices 17. An additional constraint is that wafer 14 is made from low oxygen silicon (i.e., float zone silicon) to minimize the SiO<sub>2</sub> absorption peak in the 8-14 micron wavelength window. Top cap wafer 14 is coated with an anti-reflection coating 34. Wafer 14 has a solder adhesion metal and solder ring 15 which matches detector wafer 13, a border 18 forming chamber 16 above detectors 17, and holes 35 through wafer 14 to access the wire bond pads on detector wafer 13.

FIGS. 5a through 5f illustrate steps of fabrication for top cap 14. The starting material is a double polished silicon wafer 14 grown by float zone for minimum oxygen content. 1.8 micron layers of thermally grown SiO<sub>2</sub> 36a and 37a in FIG. 5a are covered by 0.3 microns of LPCVD Si<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> layers 36b and 37b to mask the KOH etching. Pattern and cut via 35 by plasma etching on outside layers 36a and 36b and recess 16 on inside layer 37b of Si<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> in FIG. 5b. The wafer 14 is then put in a fixture to allow etching of the outside surface 35 and 36b while protecting the inside 16 and 37b to KOH etch wafer 14 through hole 35 to 90 percent of the way through top cap wafer 14, as shown in FIG. 5c. Wafer 14 is removed from the etching fixture and hole 16 is cleared of remaining SiO<sub>2</sub> layer 37a in FIG. 5d by buffered oxide etch. Hole 35 is further etched through wafer 14 to layer 37a to complete bond pad hole 35. Also, FIG. 5d shows the etching that creates recess 16 on the inside of wafer 14. Nitride and oxide mask layers 36a, 36b, 37a and 37b are stripped from wafer 14. Antireflective coating 38 is applied to wafer 14. A solder ring pattern is applied to the inside surface encircling recess 16, by using a laminated Riston process for lift-off. Five hundred angstroms of Ti, 2000 angstroms of Ni and 500 angstroms of Au of adhesion metals 39 are deposited in an E-beam evaporator. A five micron layer 40 of InPb (10:90) solder is deposited onto adhesion metals 39 in the thermal evaporator. The Riston mask is lifted off and the field SiO<sub>2</sub> in BOE etched off resulting in solder ring 18 in FIG. 5f.

Bonding and sealing detector wafer 13 and top cap wafer 14 are done with clean surfaces. Bonding surfaces of wafers 13 and 14 are sputter cleaned just prior to doing the wafer bond. The following sequence of events indicate how to align, bond and seal the wafer pair 13 and 14 of FIGS. 6a, 6b and 6c. To begin, the Au solder ring surface 33 of detector wafer 13 is sputter cleaned. The InPb surface of ring 18 of top cap wafer 14 is oxygen plasma cleaned. Wafers 13 and 14 of FIG. 6a are aligned in a bonding cassette using 0.002 inch spacers between the wafers. The aligned wafer pair is put in a vacuum press which is pumped to a good vacuum with a turbo pump. Wafers 13 and 14 are pressed together in FIG. 6b, with about 400 pounds of pressure. The temperature of the wafers is ramped up to 300 degrees C., which takes about one hour. Then wafers 13 and 14 are held at this achieved temperature and pressure for five minutes. Then wafers 13 and 14 are cooled down to room temperature, and the vacuum chamber is vented.

Bonded wafer pair 13 and 14 is put into an E-beam evaporation system for sputter cleaning of the pump-out port 11 surfaces, followed by adhesion layers of 500 angstroms of Ti, 1000 angstroms of Ni and 500 angstroms of Au. Wafer pair 13 and 14 is put into a thermal evaporator system; and a bake out of the wafer pair at 250 degrees C. is preferred for four hours under a vacuum. The wafer pair 13 and 14 is cooled down but the environment about the wafer pair is kept at the desired vacuum. Twenty microns of InPb (50:50) 12 is deposited onto the backside of detector wafer 13 to plug port 11 in FIG. 6c, to seal vacuum chamber 16 of wafer pair 13 and 14. On the wafer 20 scale, a plurality of ports 11 in a plurality of chips are plugged. Then wafers 13 and 14, combined as wafer 20, may be removed from the vacuum environment. Wafer 20 may be cut into individual chips 10, each having its own sealed chamber 16 enclosing detectors 17.

Further variations on this theme include top cap wafer 14 composed of Germanium for better IR transmission or ZnSe for broadband transmission (i.e., visible and IR) or other optical window materials for application specific optical bandpass behavior. Top cap wafer 14 may have integrated components built in or on the surface in addition to those on the detector wafer 13. Detector wafer 13 having a diaphragm pressure sensor integrated into it, the sealed chamber then forms a vacuum pressure reference. Detector wafer 13 may have infrared bolometer arrays with readout electronics integrated into the wafer. Detector wafer 13 may have moving parts to be sealed in a chamber for other functional purposes. The bonded wafer pair 13 and 14 in FIG. 6c may be hermetically sealed with a controlled residual pressure of a specific gas type for optimal thermal, mechanical or other properties rather than simply evacuated for the devices within the chamber.

We claim:

1. A method for making a wafer-pair having deposited layer plugged sealed chambers, comprising:

growing a thermal layer on a first side of a first silicon wafer;

depositing a nitride layer on the thermal layer;

depositing, patterning and removing portions of first metal layer on the nitride layer for a plurality of devices;

depositing, patterning and removing portions of a second metal layer on the nitride and first metal layers for the plurality of devices;

patterning and removing material from the first silicon wafer and layers on the first side of the first silicon wafer to make a plurality of pump-out ports through the first silicon wafer and layers on the first silicon wafer;

masking and removing material from a first side of a second silicon wafer to form a plurality of recesses in the first side of the second silicon wafer;

forming a sealing ring on the first side of the second silicon wafer around each of the plurality of recesses; and

positioning the first side of the first silicon wafer next to the first side of the second silicon wafer; and

wherein:

each sealing ring is in contact with at least one of the layers on the first side of the first silicon wafer;

each recess of the plurality of recesses results in a chamber containing at least one device of the plurality of devices;

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each sealing ring encloses at least one pump-out port of the plurality of pump-out ports; and the first and second silicon wafers are effectively a bonded together set of wafers.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

placing the set of wafers in an environment of a vacuum wherein a vacuum occurs in each chamber via the at least one pump-out port; and

depositing a layer of material on the second side of the first silicon wafer and the plurality of pump-out ports on the second side of the first silicon wafer, wherein each chamber is sealed from the environment.

3. The method of claim 2, further comprising baking out the set of wafers prior to depositing the layer of material on the second side of the first wafer and the plurality of pump-out ports on the second side of the first silicon wafer.

4. The method of claim 3, further comprising coating the second wafer with antireflection material.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the second silicon wafer is made from low oxygen silicon or float zone silicon to minimize an absorption peak in an 8–14 micron wavelength region of light going through the second silicon wafer to the plurality of devices.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the set of wafers is cut into a plurality of chips wherein each chip has one or more sealed chambers.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein the plurality of devices comprise thermoelectric detectors.

8. The method of claim 6, wherein the plurality of devices comprise bolometers.

9. A method for making a wafer-pair having at least one deposited layer plugged sealed chamber, comprising:

growing a first thermal layer on a first side of a first silicon wafer;

depositing a nitride layer on the first thermal layer; depositing and patterning a first metal layer on the nitride layer for at least one device;

depositing and patterning a second metal layer on the nitride layer and the first metal layer for the at least one device;

patterning and removing material from the first silicon wafer and layers on the first side of the first silicon wafer and from a second side of the first silicon wafer to make a pump-out port through the first silicon wafer and the layers on the first silicon wafer;

masking and removing material from a first side of a second silicon wafer, to form a recess in the first side of the second silicon wafer;

forming a sealing ring on the first side of the second silicon wafer around the recess; and

positioning the first side of the first silicon wafer next to the first side of the second silicon wafer; and

wherein:

the sealing ring is in contact with at least one of the layers on the first side of the first silicon layer;

the at least one device is within the recess resulting in a chamber containing the at least one device;

the pump-out port is within the sealing ring; and the first and second silicon wafers are effectively a bonded together set of wafers.

10. The method of claim 9, further comprising:

placing the bonded together set of wafers in an environment of a vacuum wherein a vacuum occurs in the chamber via the pump-out port; and

depositing a layer of material on the second side of the first silicon wafer and the pump-out port on the second

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side of the first silicon wafer, wherein the chamber is sealed from the environment.

11. The method of claim 10, further comprising baking out the bonded together set of wafers prior to depositing the layer of material on the second side of the first wafer and the pump-out port on the second side of the first silicon wafer.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the at least one device is a detector.

13. The method of claim 12, further comprising coating the second silicon wafer with antireflection material.

14. The method of claim 11, wherein the second silicon wafer is made from low oxygen silicon or float zone silicon to minimize an absorption peak in an 8–14 micron wavelength region of light going through the second silicon wafer to the at least one device.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the at least one device is a thermoelectric detector.

16. The method of claim 14, wherein the at least one device is a bolometer.

17. The method of claim 11, wherein the at least one device is an emitter.

18. A method for making a wafer-pair having at least one deposited layer plugged sealed chamber, comprising:

growing a first layer of thermal  $\text{SiO}_2$  on a first side of a first silicon wafer;

depositing a first layer of  $\text{Si}_3\text{N}_4$  on the first layer of thermal  $\text{SiO}_2$ ;

growing a second layer of thermal  $\text{SiO}_2$  on a second side of the first silicon wafer;

depositing a second layer of  $\text{Si}_3\text{N}_4$  on the second layer of thermal  $\text{SiO}_2$ ;

depositing a layer of a first metal on the second layer of  $\text{Si}_3\text{N}_4$ ;

patterning the layer of the first metal;

depositing a layer of a second metal on the layer of the first metal;

patterning the layer of the second metal;

depositing a third layer of  $\text{Si}_3\text{N}_4$  on the layers of the first and second metals;

etching at least one via through the third layer of  $\text{Si}_3\text{N}_4$ , the layers of the second and first metals, the second layer of  $\text{Si}_3\text{N}_4$  and the second layer of thermal  $\text{SiO}_2$ ;

etching a pump-out port through the first layer of  $\text{SiO}_2$  and a first portion of the silicon wafer proximate to the at least one via;

etching within the at least one via through a second portion of the silicon wafer to the pump-out port;

growing a third layer of thermal  $\text{SiO}_2$  on a first side of a second silicon wafer and a fourth layer of

thermal  $\text{SiO}_2$  on a second side of the second silicon wafer;

growing a fourth layer of  $\text{Si}_3\text{N}_4$  on the third layer of thermal  $\text{SiO}_2$  and a fifth layer of  $\text{Si}_3\text{N}_4$  on the fourth layer of  $\text{SiO}_2$ ;

patterning and cutting the fourth layer  $\text{Si}_3\text{N}_4$  and the third layer of thermal  $\text{SiO}_2$  for a bond pad area;

etching a first portion of the second silicon wafer through the fourth  $\text{Si}_3\text{N}_4$  layer and third  $\text{SiO}_2$  layer for the bond pad area;

patterning and cutting the fifth layer of  $\text{Si}_3\text{N}_4$  and fourth layer of thermal  $\text{SiO}_2$  for a recess area;

etching a second portion from the second side of the second silicon wafer to form a recess;

applying an optical coating to the second silicon wafer to substantially reduce reflections;

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applying a solder ring proximate to a perimeter of the recess, on the second side of the second silicon wafer; aligning the first silicon wafer with the second silicon wafer, having the first side of the first silicon wafer and the second side of the second silicon wafer face each other;

putting the first and second silicon wafers in a vacuum; pressing the first and second silicon wafers together with a pressure;

ramping the temperature of the silicon wafers up to a high temperature;

increasing the pressure of the first and second silicon wafers against each other to bond the silicon wafers to each other;

baking out the first and second silicon wafers;

cooling down the first and second silicon wafers under a maintained vacuum;

depositing a layer of a metal on the second side of the second silicon wafer to plug the pump-out port to seal the recess with a vacuum; and

removing the bonded first and second silicon wafers from the vacuum.

19. A method for making a wafer-pair having deposited layer plugged sealed chambers, comprising:

growing a thermal layer on a first side of a first silicon wafer;

patterning and removing material from the first silicon wafer and layers on the first side of the first silicon wafer and from a second side of the first silicon wafer to make a plurality of pump-out ports through the first silicon wafer and layers on the first silicon wafer;

masking and removing material from a first side of a second silicon wafer to form a plurality of recesses in the first side of the second silicon wafer;

forming a sealing ring on the first side of the second silicon wafer around each of the plurality of recesses; and

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positioning the first side of the first silicon wafer next to the first side of the second silicon wafer; and

wherein:

each sealing ring is in contact with at least one of the layers on the first side of the first silicon layer;

each recess of the plurality of recesses results in a chamber;

each sealing ring encloses at least one pump-out port of the plurality of pump-out ports; and

the first and second silicon wafers are effectively a bonded together set of wafers.

20. The method of claim 19, further comprising:

placing the set of wafers in an environment of a vacuum wherein a vacuum occurs in each chamber via a pump-out port; and

depositing a layer of material on the second side of the first silicon wafer and the plurality of pump-out ports on the second side of the first silicon wafer, wherein each chamber is sealed from the environment.

21. The method of claim 20, further comprising baking out the set of wafers prior to depositing the layer of material on the second side of the first wafer and the plurality of pump-out ports on the second side of the first silicon wafer.

22. The method of claim 21, wherein the set of wafers is cut into a plurality of chips wherein each chip has one or more sealed chambers.

23. The method of claim 22, wherein the one or more sealed chambers contains one or more devices.

24. The method of claim 19, further comprising:

placing the set of wafers in an environment of a gas wherein the gas enters each chamber via a pump-out port; and

depositing a layer of material on the second side of the first silicon wafer and the plurality of pump-out ports on the second side of the first silicon wafer, wherein each chamber is sealed from an ambient environment.

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